

R E M A R K S

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

RE: INTERVIEW

The Examiner is thanked for conducting an interview in connection with the present application.

THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 has been amended as discussed with the Examiner to clarify that in the optical element drive mechanism of the present invention, an end surface of the magnet, at which a magnetic pole is provided, is substantially parallel to the reflecting surface of the movable portion. See Fig. 11 of the present application, wherein the end surface (top surface) of the magnet 63 at which the (top end) magnetic poles N S are provided is substantially parallel to the reflecting surface of the mirror (65). Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that amended independent claim 1 now more clearly recites the structure of the present invention, as fully supported by the disclosure in Fig. 11.

With the structure of the present invention as recited in amended independent claim 1, since the end surface of the magnet (i.e., the top surface of the magnet 63) is arranged parallel to

the reflecting surface of the mirror (65), the mirror 65, the magnet 63 and the housing 62 can be stacked along one direction, such that easy assembly of the device is facilitated.

By contrast, as discussed with the Examiner, USP 6,373,811 ("Ikegame et al") discloses a structure in which the end surfaces of the magnets at which the magnetic poles are provided are perpendicular to the reflecting surface. See, for example, the left and right end surfaces of the right hand side magnet 112f in Fig. 10A of Ikegame et al, at which the N and S poles are provided, and which are perpendicular to the reflecting surface. See also, for example, the upper and lower surfaces of the upper end side magnet 112f in Fig. 10A of Ikegame et al, at which the N and S poles are provided, and which are perpendicular to the reflecting surface. It is respectfully pointed out, moreover, that the top and bottom end surfaces (in the Z axis direction) of the magnets 112f in Ikegame et al (which are parallel to the reflecting surface) are not provided with a magnetic pole. Indeed, if the end surfaces of the magnets 112f of Ikegami et al were parallel to the reflecting surface, then only either the N pole or the S pole of each of the magnets 112f would be seen in Fig. 10A of Ikegame et al (since one of the poles would be hidden in the view of Fig. 10A). Since both the N and S poles are shown in Fig. 10A of Ikegame et al, however, it is respectfully submitted that it is clear that the magnets 112f of Ikegame et al

are not oriented in the manner of the claimed present invention such that an end surface of the magnet, at which a magnetic pole is provided, is substantially parallel to the reflecting surface of the movable portion.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Ikegame et al clearly does not disclose, teach or suggest the structure of the present invention as recited in amended independent claim 1.

For the Examiner's convenience, submitted herewith is a translation of excerpts from The Institute of Electrical Engineers of Japan, "Magnetics - Fundamentals and Applications," pp. 7-8 Corona Publishing Co., Ltd., 1999. As clearly shown in Fig. 1.9 of this publication, magnetic poles are provided only on the two end surfaces of the magnet and no poles appear on the other surfaces of the magnet.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that Ikegame et al clearly does not disclose, teach or suggest the feature of the present invention as recited in amended independent claim 1 whereby an end surface of the magnet, at which a magnetic pole is provided, is substantially parallel to the reflecting surface of the movable portion, and that amended independent claim 1 and claims 2-29 depending therefrom all patentably distinguish over Ikegame et al under 35 USC 102 as well as under 35 USC 103.

If the Examiner has any comments, questions, objections or recommendations, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned for prompt action.

Respectfully submitted,

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